But seas between us braid hae roar'd

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But seas between us braid hae roar'd

by KareliaSweet

Summary

Eight years, it's been happening. Since Will was fifteen years old. The first time, he thought it was a seizure. He still doesn't know what it is, really, but after the fifth time he realized it was... something. Whoever he was switching with was real, and human, and just as terrified as he was.

Notes

Soulmate prompt:
At new years.. you posses your soulmates body? maybe hannigram over the years?

See the end of the work for more notes

10

It's going to happen again, he just knows it.

9

But he's ready this time.

8

Last year he'd seen one word, scrawled on a post it note on his desk.

7

Wherever 'his' desk was.

6

The word was in English, but he understood.

5

'Mirror'

4

So that's where Hannibal is standing, wearing the nicest suit he owns.

3

Maybe he'll get more than a few seconds this time.

2

He wants to see his soulmate's face.

1

He closes his eyes. And opens someone else's.

They're blue, and wide, and beautiful.

He is beautiful.

There's another post-it, stuck to the unfamiliar mirror in front of him. Hannibal peels it off with lovely fine-boned hands that don't belong to him.

My name is Will.

Hannibal looks at Will in the mirror, touches the halo of soft curling hair that frames his face. He presses one fingertip to the bottom lip of a cherubic mouth and feels himself - but not himself - tremble.

"Will," he says, except he doesn't, just gets his mouth around the W before shadow swings around him and sucks him away in a flash of dark stars.

When he comes to, he is himself again. On his mirror, in his own room, are the smudges of a handprint. He knows that hand now. He holds his own palm against it and imagines he can still feel the heat of Will's hand from the inside.

-x-

Eight years, it's been happening. Since Will was fifteen years old. The first time, he thought it was a seizure. He still doesn't know what it is, really, but after the fifth time he realized it was... something. Whoever he was switching with was real, and human, and just as terrified as he was. But there was also something about this man - and Will called him a man because he could feel it in the breadth of his shoulders and the weight of his heart - that comforted him. Will hated being in his own skin so terribly that wearing someone else's, even for just a minute, felt like the most luxurious blanket.

If he's honest, he's gotten quite addicted to it. Except now, he craves more. He wants to touch this man's skin with his own hands. Especially since he's seen his face.

It's wonderful, that face - and strange, too. Will could have stared at it for another hour with his breath held tight in his chest and never let go.

He'd hoped for a name, but maybe next year.

There's always next year.

-x-

It is impossible to search for a Will with blue eyes and curly hair. His soulmate is a needle in a haystack made of needles.

Hannibal is finally using the dreaded 's' word, because he can't not after seeing his face. And more than that, knowing that the fragile shell he's found himself wander into every January 1st is beyond a doubt *real*. Real and true and clearly troubled, but so sweetly that Hannibal wants nothing more than to hold him in his arms until they melt together and the trouble floats away.

Tonight, he has a plan.

The mirror he stands in front of is covered in notes. He's arranged them in order of importance, never sure how much time they have. If Will has a good memory - and Hannibal knows that he does even just from the brief swims he's taken in it - he should be able to retain the first three notes. If he can memorize the fourth they might not have to wait another 365 days.

Hannibal looks at the clock. 11:59. The second hand tick, tick, ticks...

-x-

10

Will's palms are sweating.

9

Did he leave too much? Not enough?

8

He hopes he looks good in this suit.

7

Hannibal had looked so very, very good.

6

Maybe he should try and speak again.

5

He's pretty sure Hannibal has an accent.

4

But what if Hannibal hadn't liked what he'd seen?

3

What if this whole year of waiting has been foolish?

2

He should take some of his notes down, this is so --

1

-- embarrassing, oh God

Hello Will.

You are so beautiful.

Will, as Hannibal, gasps. The floor length mirror is covered in notes, even more than he left for Hannibal in his own room. Thank God he's a voracious reader. He scans to the next note.

My name is Hannibal. I live in Florence.

The next,

I would like to meet you.

The heart that isn't Will's own skips a beat. He scans over to the fourth note.

My telephone number is 39 555 27681

Will commits it to memory. There is a blank space after the fourth note, just wide enough for him to see Hannibal's face. He smiles.

"Hello," he says.

God, that voice.

His eyes scan to the clock Hannibal left beside the mirror. The second hand is closing in on 12:01 - they've never lasted more than a minute before. He looks back to the mirror. One more note. He has time.

I think, the note reads, *you are my soulmate*.

"Am I?" Will asks in an accented voice, and then he feels his soul being tugged far away.

-x-

Hannibal comes to himself with a shudder, trying to assemble in his head the jumble of notes Will had left. He'd been so busy marveling at the softness of Will's skin he hadn't read enough.

Will thinks he is handsome, that much he recalls. His last name is Graham. But there was something else. What was it? Will was afraid of something, something Hannibal might see.

He glides down the hallways of his memory palace, hoping for a glimpse of the words just out of reach.

And then his phone rings.

"Hello?"

Silence. A breath.

"Hannibal."

"Will."

"Hello."

Quiet shared laughter.

"I think this phone call has been long overdue."

"Mm. I'm glad you were able to reach Florence."

"Do you really want to meet me?"

"Of course, Will."

"But you know nothing about me."

"Oh no. I think I know very much. I think I've known you most of my life."

A small, nervous sigh.

"Will?"

"There are things about me."

"What sort of things?"

"Did you read my notes?"

A flash of words, too quick to decipher. A warning?

"I tried. I'm afraid I was too absorbed in you."

A shuddering, fluttery breath.

"Christ, Hannibal, you can't say that..."

"Why can't I? You're my soulmate."

"But you've never even met me."

"Will. I've been inside you."

An audible, guttural moan.

"Please..."

"Please, what, my darling?"

"Before you meet me. You need to see. You need to see, Hannibal."

"See what?"

"Who I am."

Silence.

"Will, I would be honoured."

"You don't know that."

The words flash again, a glaring red.

"Try me."

"Another year. Look, from inside. And then..."

"Then?"

"I'll be waiting. Goodbye, Hannibal."

One long breath, held between two bodies.

"Goodbye, Will."

-x-

They speak again, infrequently. Small things. What is your favourite colour? Do you play an instrument? That scar on your hand, what happened? Who is your closest friend? What does the sky look like where you are?

Blue.

Guitar, sometimes.

I was defending someone I love.

My dogs. I'm not good with people.

Empty, without you.

Always, they skirt the darkness. Always, they end their calls with a breath of silent longing. Always, they ache.

The year passes miserably slow. Hannibal keeps himself busy the way he always does. He spends long hours in the winding corridors of his memory palace. Its walls are now covered in notes, all copies of the few Will had left for him. He only seeks one - the one in red ink - the one that escapes him, even still.

He finds it on December 30th, and everything changes.

The words, once uncovered, spill over his fingers and curl around his arms. They wind up his shoulders and cling to him like a lover.

Oh please, Hannibal thinks, *let it be true*.

He calls Will. It rings once. He hangs up. He can wait. First, there is work that must be done.

-x-

10

Hannibal hopes that he has not misjudged.

9

He knows in his heart that he hasn't.

8

He hopes Will appreciates what has been left before him.

7

He knows in his soul that he shall.

6

This might be one of his greatest designs.

5

Love is a terrible muse, after all.

4

This declaration will either undo him-

3

-or free him completely.

2

Either way, he can't wait to see what's on the other side.

1

Hannibal looks down at hands that are covered in blood. It's smeared darkest over the knuckles and grooved deep under the nails. There's some on his face, he can feel it dripping down Will's cheek.

(Will looks up at a man, but not a man. A flayed and unnaturally bent body that has been moulded into the shape of a human heart. Pinned to it is a note, crisp and clean.)

Hannibal turns in a full circle. Everything is an unholy mess of gore. It's more beautiful than he could have ever imagined. Scrawled in mottled blood on the stone beneath his feet are four words.

This is my design.

(Will steps closer in Hannibal's shoes, fingers trembling as he reaches for the card. Tears that rightfully belong to him fall from his soulmate's eyes - and who else can Hannibal be but his soulmate, he knows that now - the words blur before him. He blinks and everything is clear.)

My Love. I see you.

They both fall to their knees.

They both begin to weep.

They both think the same words, as one:

I did not know how much I loved you.

Will opens his eyes and is himself again. There is cold stone beneath him, but not the stone he left behind. A hand falls to his shoulder. He looks up and sees his heart.

"Hannibal."

Hannibal pulls him to his feet.

"You are here."

Will nods, shaking.

"How?"

Hannibal's hands slide into his hair, matted with blood.

"Do you know," he murmurs, "I don't care."

Will's eyes stay open as Hannibal kisses acceptance into his mouth and breathes it into his bones. He trembles once, then his arms fly about Hannibal's neck and he kisses him back in pure relief. Blood smears between them like a vow.

"Oh God," Will says between kisses. "Tell me this is real."

Hannibal, in answer, fists his hand tight into Will's hair and yanks sharply backward. Will moves with the pain and emits a short, wet moan. His eyes flash in challenge, ready to struggle, but Hannibal holds fast and lets his teeth descend, scraping harshly over Will's throat.

"Mine," Hannibal says, and bites, short and sharp. He paints his next words hotly over Will's throat

"Is that answer enough for you?"

Will nods, then with an elegant twist frees himself from Hannibal's grip and curls a hand in the front of his coat.

"I'm staying," Will says fiercely, "here. With you."

Hannibal can't help but laugh as he pulls Will into the circle of his arms.

"Darling," he replies, "I am never letting you go."

End Notes

I feel like this is a slightly different style from my usual work, at least in parts. I hope you enjoyed it!

tumblr: lovecrimevariations

times have been tough for me of late so I'm leaving this link here... feel free to dismiss, I won't post this on any other stories.

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!